Message

From: Dunn, Alexandra [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=426D0177EAAB4001A5C85F051565997E-DUNN, ALEXA]
Sent: 10/30/2020 10:52:45 AM
To: Meadows, Carrie Vicenta [Meadows.CarrieVicenta@epa.gov]; Megan Striegel (Striegel.Megan@epa.gov) [Striegel.Megan@epa.gov]; Block, Molly [block.molly@epa.gov]; Drinkard, Andrea [Drinkard.Andrea@epa.gov]
CC: Rosen, Bailey [Rosen.Bailey@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: OCSPP Special News on Dicamba

Do you all get these?

Alexandra Dapolito Dunn, Esq.
Assistant Administrator
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention
US Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, DC

From: Rosen, Bailey <Rosen.Bailey@epa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2020 5:02 PM
To: Bolen, Derrick <bolen.derrick@epa.gov>; Collazo Reyes, Yvette <CollazoReyes.Yvette@epa.gov>; Dekleva, Lynn <dekleva.lynn@epa.gov>; Dennis, Allison <Dennis.Allison@epa.gov>; Drinkard, Andrea <Drinkard.Andrea@epa.gov>; Dunn, Alexandra <dunn.alexandra@epa.gov>; Fischer, David <Fischer.David@epa.gov>; Giddings, Daniel <giddings.daniel@epa.gov>; Hanley, Mary <Hanley.Mary@epa.gov>; Hartman, Mark <Hartman.Mark@epa.gov>; Henry, Tala <Henry.Tala@epa.gov>; Hughes, Hayley <hughes.hayley@epa.gov>; Kaiser, Sven-Erik <Kaiser.Sven-Erik@epa.gov>; Keigwin, Richard <Keigwin.Richard@epa.gov>; Kochis, Daniel <Kochis.daniel@epa.gov>; Labbe, Ken <Labbe.Ken@epa.gov>; Lieberman, Paige <Lieberman.Paige@epa.gov>; Mills, Madeline <Mills.Madeline@epa.gov>; Nguyen, Khanh <Nguyen.Khanh@epa.gov>; OPS CISD CB <OPS_CISD_CB@epa.gov>; Richmond, Jonah <Richmond.Jonah@epa.gov>; Siciliano, CarolAnn <Siciliano.CarolAnn@epa.gov>; Sullivan, Melissa <sullivan.melissa@epa.gov>; Tyler, Tom <Tyler.Tom@epa.gov>; Vendinello, Lynn <Vendinello.Lynn@epa.gov>; Vernon, Jennifer <Vernon.Jennifer@epa.gov>
Subject: OCSPP Special News on Dicamba

OCSPP News Round-Up

Special News on Dicamba

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- Nation of Change 10/29; EPA approves use of herbicides linked to cancer and crop cross contamination
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- St. Louis Public Radio 10/28; U.S. EPA Approves Bayer, BASF Dicamba Weedkillers Despite Farmers' Concerns
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- Southeast Ag Net 10/28; GCC Pleased with EPA Decision
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- Kokomo Perspective 10/28; EPA updates five-year dicamba labels
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- Cotton Grower 10/28; BASF Preps for New Dicamba Label With New Products, Training
- Ag Web 10/28; What the New Dicamba Label Looks Like in the Real World
- The Counter 10/28; After a brief ban, E.P.A. decides to allow controversial weed killer dicamba
- DTN Progressive Farmer 10/28; New Dicamba Labels

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Dicamba critics plan to challenge EPA registration

The Fence Post

https://www.thefencepost.com/news/dicamba-critics-plan-to-challenge-epa-registration/

The groups that won a June court decision requiring the Environmental Protection Agency to revoke registrations for dicamba plan to challenge EPA's decision Tuesday to register three dicamba products for use on soybeans and cotton.

"The Center for Food Safety, Center for Biological Diversity, National Family Farm Coalition, and Pesticide Action Network North America, all parties to the prior litigation, plan to challenge today's decision," the Center for Food Safety said in a news release.

"Rather than evaluating the significant costs of dicamba drift as the Ninth Circuit told them the law required, EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage. We will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals," said George Kimbrell, legal director at Center for Food Safety.

"While today's registration alleges it has addressed the rampant drift problems, as the Ninth Circuit found, none of the previous changes were sufficient to reduce dicamba drift," the center said in the news release. "According to agronomists, dicamba has caused the most extensive drift damage ever seen in the history of U.S. agriculture. In just four years of use, it has injured at least 5 million acres of soybeans; decimated fruit orchards and vegetable farms; and damaged trees, backyard gardens, and natural areas throughout much of rural America."

"Given EPA-approved versions of dicamba have already damaged millions of U.S. acres of crops and natural areas, there's no reason to trust that the agency got it right this time," said Nathan Donley, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity. "As the judges who tossed out the EPA's previous approval stated, the agency wrongly dismissed many of dicamba's proven harms. At this point, the EPA has shown such callous indifference to the damage dicamba has caused to farmers and wildlife alike, and has been so desperate to appease the pesticide industry, it has zero credibility when it comes to pesticide safety."

EPA approves use of herbicides linked to cancer and crop cross contamination

Ashley Curtin, Nation of Change

https://www.nationofchange.org/2020/10/29/epa-approves-use-of-herbicides-linked-to-cancer-and-crop-cross-contamination/

The Environmental Protection Agency approved the use of three herbicides for an additional four years after the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the agency vacate the use of the weedkillers. The three herbicides, Syngenta's Tavium, Bayer's XtendiMax and BASF's Engenia, which are based on the chemical, dicamba, have been linked to cancer.

In June, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals "cited the EPA's failure to acknowledge the risks the chemical poses to conventional crops and the environment," a press release stated. Dicamba, the main ingredient in the three herbicides, is "highly volatile and can easily drift onto unprotected neighboring fields from fields of crops genetically engineered to withstand it."

A study conducted by the National Cancer Institute linked dicamba to an increased risk of colon cancer among the applicators of the herbicide. It's also linked to nervous system damage. Children between 1 and 2 years old are the largest population heavily exposed to dicamba as the chemical's residue can be found on most foods they consume, according to the EPA's own risk assessment of the herbicides.

While dicamba can pose risks to the environment, farmworkers and children, the EPA's decision sides with the farmers and pesticide industry as the agency approved the extended use of the three herbicides on GMO soybean and cotton fields.

"Protecting the pesticide industry has been a top priority of the EPA during the Trump administration," said EWG President Ken Cook. "Millions of acres of crops will continue to be damaged, and the health of farmworkers, children and all those who live near farms where dicamba is used will be at risk—all in the name of appeasing chemical agriculture."

Dicamba Decision Provides Certainty to Ag Retailers, Farmers

Jody Heemstra, DRG News

https://drgnews.com/2020/10/29/dicamba-decision-provides-certainty-to-ag-retailers-farmers/

The Agricultural Retailers Association says the Environmental Protection Agency offers certainty to retailers and farmers with the recent five-year registrations for dicamba herbicides. ARA President and CEO Daren Coppock says, "Now farmers and their retailers can make firmer plans for the next five years with this critical question answered." American Soybean Association President Bill Gordon thanked the EPA in a statement for "the many steps and time invested in coming to this decision." EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler late Tuesday announced the registration for three dicamba herbicides, Bayer's ExtendiMax, BASF's Engenia and Syngenta's Tavium. The announcement follows a court case in June that invalidated the registrations for ExtendiMax, Engenia and Corteva's FeXapan. The registration does include a cutoff date for over the top applications for soybeans of June 30 and cotton of July 30. Gordon of ASA points out that dicamba is "one of many tools integral to the success" of farmers facing different crop production challenges.

A Deeper Dive into EPA's Dicamba Re-Registration

Jacqui Fatka, Farm Progress

https://www.farmprogress.com/crops/deeper-dive-epas-dicamba-re-registration

Many growers are finishing up the 2020 harvest and already looking to purchase their seeds for 2021. As many genetics have moved to include dicamba resistant varieties, the news Oct. 27 by the Environmental Protection Agency to offer a five-year re-registration for dicamba use for over-the-top applications offers another important tool for growers in managing weeds.

EPA approved new registrations for two "over-the-top" (OTT) dicamba products—XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology and Engenia Herbicide—and extended the registration for an additional OTT dicamba product, Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology. These registrations are only for use on dicamba-tolerant (DT) cotton and soybeans and will expire in 2025.

Related: EPA rolls out 5-year dicamba registration

Greg Kruger, a weed science extension specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said the timing of the announcement is good for growers as many are making decisions on what to plant next year. "This decision allows them to have confidence that if they buy a dicamba-resistant trait, the tool will be there to use."

Grower confidence was clearly shaken in the summer of 2020 when a court issued an immediate vacatur of three dicamba pesticide registrations. Growers and commercial applicators were allowed to use existing stocks that were in their possession as of June 3 consistent with the approved label until July 31. EPA then set out to create an improved data profile in this latest re-registration as it worked to update label requirements for the chemistry used by widely by growers. In 2018, approximately 41% of U.S. soybean acreage was planted with dicamba-tolerant (DT) seed and almost 70% of U.S. cotton acreage was planted with DT seed in 2019.

Related: Companies clarify new EPA rules for dicamba

Kruger has spent a considerable amount of time with growers, chemical companies and even the EPA to help better understand how dicamba operates. At the research level, he has worked with pesticide registrants to generate the data sets to defend the registration decisions made by EPA. His ongoing research on off-target movement and the impact of boom heights is already being considered in the registration of a second generation dicamba product.

Kruger shares it is important for producers to understand the label changes. "Every applicator needs to have enough fear to handle the product responsibly."

He added that at some level it is incumbent on professionals in the industry, as well as the companies and university specialists, to make sure growers are properly educated on how to comply with the very specific label for dicamba application.

"You can't dump a very specific label and expect them to get it all right," Kruger said of the growers and applicators using dicamba. "I believe there's a huge gap in education and training. Responsibility has to be conveyed to applicators that in order to continue to have these tools available, we have to take the label seriously and follow that label."

Moving forward, in addition to properly following the label, Kruger always suggests direct conversations between farmers to rectify any problems with potential drift. Although it is important to discuss any potential drift with state departments of agriculture, Kruger always recommends calling your neighbor first. "It's a tough conversation to have, but if you start there, a lot of times things can be worked out."

In 2016, EPA began receiving reports of crop injury alleged to be caused by off-target movement from the use of dicamba. Because the registrations for OTT use had not yet been issued, EPA concluded these 2016 incidents were related to misuse of previously registered, more volatile dicamba pesticide products on DT cotton and DT soybeans. In 2017, over 2,700 official cases of crop damage were reported to state departments of agriculture, estimated to be over 3.6 million acres of soybeans.

Kruger said in 2017, the first year dicamba was approved for OTT for soybeans and cotton, he would challenge that glyphosate experienced more drift issues than dicamba, however, low levels of dicamba drift create a visual response even if yields didn't suffer.

Cut-off dates

The mandatory application cut-off dates - June 30 for soybeans and July 30 for cotton - on the product labels reduces the probability of dicamba application on days more favorable for dicamba volatilization. EPA stated the June 30 and July 30 dates were informed by data on the effect of temperature on volatility. EPA utilized historical incident information and meteorological data to conduct its analysis.

EPA compared the maximum temperature data on the day of each reported incident and determined that over 94% and 82% of the incidents occurred at temperatures above 75 degrees F and 80 degrees F, respectively. EPA then reviewed historical meteorological data to determine the proportion of total days less than 75 degrees F and 80 degrees F.

Based on this analysis, the soybean cut-off of June 30th would mean that application temperatures will be below 80 degrees F between 12% (Texas) to 89% (Minnesota) of the time, and below 75 degrees F between 3.2% (Texas) to 72% (Minnesota) of the time. The cotton cut-off of July 30th would mean that application temperatures will be below 80 degrees F, between 8% (Florida) to 66% (Virginia) of the time, and below 75 degrees F between 0.3% (Florida) and 36% (Virginia) of the time.

Kruger noted the cut-offs could limit use for many places that double crop soybeans or often experience later planting dates for soybeans.

Hooded sprayers

EPA also determined the use of hooded sprayers has the potential to reduce spray drift and therefore change what other control measures are necessary to achieve the same results. A hooded sprayer is an example of a drift reduction technology that can cover the entire spray boom and shields pesticide droplets from the wind from the height of release to the canopy reducing the potential for pesticide drift. EPA received data on tests of the RedBall 642E particular hooded sprayer which demonstrated a substantial reduction in spray drift.

A limited number of field studies on bare soil and soybean crops were conducted and the data received indicate dicamba drift would be limited to approximately 20 ft from the point of application, EPA stated. These data show great reductions in the possible movement off-field when using this particular hooded sprayer, but based on the limited information provided to EPA, the Agency determined that a 5X safety factor would address the uncertainties with this limited set of data. "Therefore, the use of this hooded sprayer would allow the 240-foot in-field spray drift buffer to be reduced to 110 feet and still be protective of non-listed plant species with a high level of confidence," EPA said in its final rule.

EPA's trials did not evaluate the use of other types of sprayers (alternative hooded broadcast, hooded in-row and layby sprayers) nor did they evaluate the use of a hooded sprayer over cotton crops. As a result, the reductions in buffer distance permitted when using hooded sprayers is limited to this one sprayer for use on soybean crops. Additional brands or models of hooded sprayers can qualify for the reduced downwind buffers for soybeans if they meet the performance standard established by testing according to EPA's approved protocol in comparison to the currently assessed hooded sprayer, the agency said.

Kruger said this could be important for some states, especially those with smaller fields. Requiring a downwind buffer of 240 feet and 310 feet in areas where listed species are located could be very difficult to manage in places with smaller field tracks. "A small fragmented field with a 310-foot buffer could take out half of the field's ability to use the product," Kruger said.

Additional leeway for states

The 2020 registration labels also provide new flexibilities for growers and states. For example, there are opportunities for growers to reduce the downwind spray buffer for soybeans through use of certain approved hooded sprayers as an alternative control method. If a state wishes to expand the federal OTT uses of dicamba to better meet special local needs, the EPA said it will work with them to support their goals.

Kruger said he would expect some states to look to expand the label, while others could further restrict the national label. Because the national label allows for the one hooded sprayer to reduce buffer zones, Kruger said this is an example of the creative things that some states may look to in encouraging a safe application, and also make it as usable as possible.

NE Farm Bureau on Dicamba announcement

Tri-State Livestock News

https://www.tsln.com/news/ne-farm-bureau-on-dicamba-announcement/

Statement by Steve Nelson, President, Regarding EPA Re-Registration of Dicamba Products

LINCOLN, NEB. – "Today's announcement that EPA will move forward to issue a five-year re-register of dicamba-based products is welcomed news. The decision will ensure these products are available for use by farmers during the 2021 growing season and beyond. Nebraska Farm Bureau has been a strong advocate for re-registration of dicamba products to ensure farmers continue to have crop protection product options. We want to thank EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler for making this decision in a timely fashion as many farmers are in the process of making decisions about herbicide purchases for the upcoming year. We look forward to EPA's release of complete details."

Background:

On June 3, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against EPA vacating the labels for a series of dicamba-based herbicides (XtendiMax, Engenia, and FeXapan). The ruling was issued in the middle of the application season and well after farmers had made planting decisions and purchases of the products. Nebraska Farm Bureau worked with numerous elected officials and the EPA which ultimately led to EPA issuing cancellation orders for the products, which did allow farmers and commercial applicators to use existing stocks of the product that were in their possession through July 31, 2020. These products would not be allowed to be used in the future without action by EPA to re-register the products.

The Nebraska Farm Bureau is a grassroots, state-wide organization dedicated to supporting farm and ranch families and working for the benefit of all Nebraskans through a wide variety of educational, service, and advocacy efforts. More than 58,000 families across Nebraska are Farm Bureau members, working together to achieve rural and urban prosperity as agriculture is a key fuel to Nebraska's economy. For more information about Nebraska Farm Bureau and agriculture, visit http://www.nefb.org

U.S. approves use of Bayer weed killer for five years

Tom Polansek, Reuters

https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-epa-dicamba/u-s-approves-use-of-bayer-weed-killer-for-five-years-idINKBN27C31X

CHICAGO (Reuters) - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said on Tuesday it will allow farmers to spray crops with weed killers based on the chemical dicamba that are sold by Bayer AG BAYGn.DE and other companies, after a U.S. appeals court blocked sales in June.

The decision is a boost for Bayer, which has been hammered by lawsuits over various chemicals in the United States since acquiring seed company Monsanto in 2018. Critics said it was another example of the Trump administration favoring business interests over regulations, just a week before the presidential election.

The EPA re-approved for five years Bayer's XtendiMax, a popular dicamba-based herbicide that is sprayed on soybeans and cotton genetically engineered to resist it. It is known to drift away and damage other crops that are not resistant to it.

The EPA will implement new restrictions on dicamba products that will "take care of the drift issues that we have witnessed in the past," Administrator Andrew Wheeler told reporters on a call.

The agency also re-approved BASF SE's BASFn.DE dicamba herbicide Engenia and extended an approval for Syngenta's Tavium.

Environmental groups have sought a ban on dicamba products, arguing they harm nearby plants and wildlife.

A three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed this summer and ruled the EPA had substantially understated the risks related to the use of dicamba. Its ruling also blocked sales of Engenia and Corteva Agriscience's CTVA.N FeXapan.

The EPA's decision invalidates the court's ruling, experts said.

"Rather than evaluating the significant costs of dicamba drift as the 9th Circuit told them the law required, EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election," said George Kimbrell, legal director at the Center for Food Safety.

Bayer and farm groups including the American Soybean Association and the American Farm Bureau praised the EPA's decision.

About 60% of the U.S. soybean crop this year was estimated to be seeded with Bayer's Xtend soybeans, according to Bayer. They need to be sprayed with the herbicide to ward off weeds that have developed a tolerance for another chemical, glyphosate.

BASF said the need for its Engenia is greater than ever due to increased weed resistance to glyphosate. Syngenta did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Corteva said it is focused on selling rival Enlist E3 soybeans seeds, which resist chemicals aside from dicamba.

The EPA said it would impose a June 30 deadline for farmers to spray dicamba on soybeans and a July 30 deadline for its use on cotton.

Farmers will not be able to spray dicamba within 240 feet to 310 feet (73 metres to 94 metres) of areas where certain species are located. The EPA will also require that users mix dicamba with another product, known as a "pH-buffering agent," to prevent it from drifting away.

U.S. EPA Approves Bayer, BASF Dicamba Weedkillers Despite Farmers' Concerns

Corrine Ruff, St. Louis Public Radio

https://news.stlpublicradio.org/economy-business/2020-10-28/u-s-epa-approves-bayer-basf-dicamba-weedkillers-despite-farmers-concerns

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is allowing farmers to use controversial weedkillers made by ag giants Bayer and BASF for another five years.

But farmers across the country, including in Missouri's Bootheel, have complained for years that the dicamba-based herbicides have drifted off target, damaging millions of acres of crops.

EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced the approval on Tuesday, saying it would give farmers who depend on the products to fight difficult-to-kill weeds certainty for next year's growing season.

"After reviewing substantial amounts of new information, conducting scientific assessments based on the best available science and carefully considering input from stakeholders, we have reached a resolution that is good for our farmers and our environment," he said in a statement.

But the decision comes after the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled this summer that the EPA has previously failed to consider the risks those weedkillers pose to other farmers' crops.

"It in no way complies with the court order that came down just four months ago vacating the approval of these products," said Nathan Donley, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity.

His organization and other environmental groups, including the Center for Food Safety, the National Family Farm Coalition and Pesticide Action Network, plan to challenge the decision.

Donley said the EPA move is pitting farmers against each other. "What EPA is doing is saying, the farmers who want to have this, you get what you want. And quite frankly, screw everyone else," he said.

"The EPA is looking out for the pesticide companies' interests more than they are the people or the country's. And that's really worrisome because they're the last line of defense when it comes to putting in regulations and restrictions that protect the environment and human health."

Bayer and BASF are celebrating the approval, which comes with a few new rules:

- The companies must simplify labeling instructions.
- Products must be mixed with an additional chemical agent to reduce drifting.
- Farmers must expand the buffer zone around fields where the products are sprayed.
- Farmers cannot use the product on soybeans after June 30 and cotton after July 30, to protect the growing season of vulnerable crops.

Alex Zenteno, Bayer dicamba product manager, said in a statement the company is committed to enhancing training for proper use of its herbicide.

"Growers have been clear how vitally important this tool is for their weed-management programs," she said.

BASF executives said in a statement that farmers need its weedkillers more than ever and that without them, farmers would have lower yields.

Bader Farms

The EPA's decision comes within a year of a major win for a Missouri peach farmer, Bill Bader, who sued Monsanto, now owned by Bayer, and BASF. He alleged the companies' weedkillers caused extensive damage to his orchards after drifting from neighboring soybean fields.

In February, a federal jury found the companies conspired to damage crops in order to increase profits of dicamba-tolerant seeds and corresponding weed killers. The jury called for punitive damages of $250 million — $200 million more than suggested by lawyers representing Bader.

The companies are still appealing that decision.

Bev Randles, a lead attorney for Bader, said she was shocked by the EPA's approval in light of the jury's decision earlier this year.

"If Monsanto and BASF are telling the truth about these new additives, these new products, then great, but I will believe it when I see it," she said.

"So long as the spraying is happening, vulnerable crops like the Baders' peach orchards and other non-DT (dicamba-tolerant), soy and other crops — these crops are going to be damaged," she said.

Randles represents other farmers who are a part of a multidistrict litigation, including more than 100 farmers across the Midwest who claim they've also been financially hurt by dicamba weed killers.

In June, Bayer said it would work to settle those claims for $400 million, but that process is ongoing.

Overnight Energy: EPA reapproves use of pesticide previously struck down in court | Interior OKs expanded oil activity in Alaska petroleum reserve | Green groups seek overturn of Colorado land plans after court decision ousting Pendley

Rachel Frazin, The Hill

https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/523062-overnight-energy-epa-reapproves-use-of-pesticide-previously-stuck

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WEEDING THROUGH THE APPROVAL: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved for five years the use of two products with the weedkiller dicamba on cotton and soybeans that are resistant to it.

It also extended the use of a third product.

The agency's prior approval of dicamba was vacated in court over its impacts on other crops that it can harm.

Wheeler said the decision will provide "certainty to growers as they make future purchasing decisions." He said the new approval circumvents issues with the prior approval by increasing the size of buffer zones between dicamba-sprayed crops and other crops and also increasing the buffer size for endangered species.

A study by researchers from the National Cancer Institute from earlier this year also linked dicamba use to liver and bile duct cancer.

However, the EPA continued to find that dicamba was not likely to be carcinogenic, saying that it identified "several deficiencies" in the study.

Wheeler told reporters on Tuesday that states would be allowed to both further restrict the use of dicamba and also further expand it.

He added that expansion wouldn't be "automatic" and that the states would have to file the "appropriate requests" with the agency.

The EPA previously re-approved dicamba in 2018 to control weeds on cotton and soybeans that have been genetically engineered to tolerate it. At that time, opponents argued that other crops that are not resistant to dicamba may be impacted by its usage.

In response to challenges, a federal court ruled earlier this year that in the 2018 re-approval, the EPA "substantially understated" certain risks posed by the chemical's use.

Read more about the reapproval here.

Daybreak Oct. 28: Ag groups welcome dicamba decision

Steve Davies, Ben Nuelle, and Bill Tomson, AgriPulse

https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/14745-daybreak-oct-28-ag-groups-welcome-dicamba-decision

Farm groups are cheering EPA's decision on over-the-top use of dicamba for five years – with some new restrictions on how the herbicide is applied.

"With those added restrictions, it should give an insurance policy or safety net to be able to fall back on to make sure we don't damage any crops around us," American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall told *Agri-Pulse*.

He said the move by EPA would provide certainty to many cotton and soybean growers and said they would be able to adapt to the new restrictions.

But keep in mind: The environmental groups that won a court victory earlier this year when the 9th U.S. Court of Appeals vacated registrations of three dicamba herbicides are vowing to sue again.

George Kimbrell, the Center for Food Safety's legal director, said the EPA "rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage."

Read our report on the EPA decision and the new restrictions here.

Trump: I'm 'right' with the farmers

President Trump was questioned by reporters why he would go to Nebraska during the last week of the campaign. The reason is that Nebraska apportions its electoral votes by congressional district, and Trump is trying to win the 2nd District, which includes Omaha, as well as the rest of the state. "I'd like to get it," Trump said.

He went on to say, "At the same time, I'm right by Iowa and the farmers. You know, we got the farmers $28 billion." That number is a reference to the Market Facilitation Program, which was intended to compensate farmers for the impact of Trump's trade war with China.

By the way: Former Sen. Heidi Heitkamp, who co-founded the One Country Project to help Democrats appeals to rural voters, predicts her party will succeed in reducing GOP margins in key battleground states this year in comparison to 2016.

"It's not as big a swing as you're going to see in suburban America, but it's enough to make the difference," she said. That obviously could help Joe Biden win the presidency but it could aid Democrats down the ballot as well.

As has been well analyzed, Hillary Clinton performed much more poorly than Barack Obama in many rural Midwest counties.

EPA SAYS ADDITIONAL STATE DICAMBA EXPANSIONS, RESTRICTIONS NEED APPROVAL

Larry Lee, Brownfield Ag News

https://brownfieldagnews.com/news/epa-says-additional-state-dicamba-expansions-restrictions-need-approval/

The EPA Administrator says expanding or restricting dicamba use under the new label will need the agency's approval. Andrew Wheeler says like before, there is a process for states to expand the use of products like dicamba. "States can further restrict. If they want to expand it, they would have to work with us. It's not an automatic expansion. They would have to file the appropriate request with the EPA, and we're more than happy to entertain those requests."

EPA's Alexandra Dunn says there is a different process for further restrictions beyond the federal label. "It is under a provision of FIPRA 24-A and the states need to pursue a legislative process within the state to restrict the federal label as the Administrator indicated. The federal label is the national program."

Wheeler says before approving the new dicamba label, the agency reviewed new scientific information and considered input from stakeholder groups. He says the new label meets FIPRA standards and addressed concerns by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. "We believe, you know, in responding to the court decision, having a national date for cotton and a national date for soybeans is responsive to the court's concerns about the labels."

Wheeler announced dicamba would be re-registered for five years at an event in Georgia Tuesday.

IOWA STATE WEED SPECIALIST REACTS TO DICAMBA LABEL CHANGES

Ken Anderson, Brownfield Ag News

https://brownfieldagnews.com/news/iowa-state-weed-specialist-reacts-to-dicamba-label-changes/

An Iowa State University Extension weed specialist says EPA's changes to the dicamba label have not alleviated all of his concerns about volatility.

Bob Hartzler says the biggest change is requiring the use of a volatility-reduction agent. But he says the jury is still out on the effectiveness of those new buffering agents.

"They look good in small-scale trials that the universities have looked at. But small-scale trials are completely different than when you start spraying a product over fields that are a couple hundred acres in size," Hartzler says. "I'm not totally convinced they will do the job. We're just going to have to wait and see."

Hartzler agrees farmers and applicators are doing a better job of managing dicamba. But he says the volatilization issue isn't going away.

"That's why I hate the volatility issue—because a farmer could do everything right and then if the wind changes direction the next day, they can be a victim of the volatilization.

"That's what's always has concerned me."

EPA RE-REGISTRATION MOVES DICAMBA FORWARD

Gil Gullickson, Successful Farming

https://www.agriculture.com/epa-re-registration-moves-dicamba-forward

There's something for everyone in the October 27 decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to re-register dicamba formulations for dicamba-tolerant soybeans and cotton.

*** It's good news for farmers who use the technology and those who make it that include BASF (Engenia) , Bayer Crop Science (XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology) and Syngenta (Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology).** EPA's re-registration will enable these firms to sell these formulations to farmers for the 2021 to 2025 growing season.

It's a strong registration that will help reduce challenges--such as off-target movmenet--that the technology has encountered in the past, says Alex Zenteno, Bayer dicamba product manager.
"We thank EPA for the many steps and time invested in coming to this decision to reregister a product relied upon by many soy growers," said Bill Gordon, a Worthington, Minnesota, soybean farmer and president of the American Soybean Association, in a news release.

Bayer is also the registrant for the dicamba formulation that Corteva Agriscience had previously marketed as DuPont FeXapan herbicide with VaporGrip Technology. Now that the EPA has registered Bayer's dicamba formulation, Corteva will be able to apply for federal registration of FeXapan, say Corteva officials.

*** If you're a critic of the technology, EPA's decision is not good news.** "Dicamba is a disaster," wrote John Zuhlke in an e-mail. He's the owner of Little Shire Farms, an Aurora, South Dakota, farm that at one point raised 600 types of vegetables. Zuhlke says off-target dicamba applied since 2017 prompted Little Shire Farms to scale back growing vegetables and switch to honey production.

There may be hope for Zuhlke and others who oppose the technology. "I really do think that the Ninth Circuit (U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit that vacated registrations for XtendiMax, Engenia and FeXapan on June 3, 2020) will find that the EPA rushed to a conclusion to appease corporate ag interests with little science to back the decision," he writes.

That's a good possibility, says Charles Benbrook, president of Benbrook Consulting Services, who has provided consulting services for the organic industry and chemical companies.
"It is highly likely that the Ninth Circuit will be asked to revisit its earlier (June 3) order ," he says.

What's Changed
Several changes for dicamba are on tap due to the re-registration. They include:

*** A national cutoff date of June 30 on soybeans and July 30 for cotton for all over-the-top uses of dicamba.** This differs from the 2018 label prohibited over-the-top (OTT) application of dicamba on soybeans 45 days after planting.

Slight differences exist in cutoff wording between chemistries. Bob Hartzler, Iowa State University Extension weeds specialist, notes XtendiMax application is prohibited after R1, even before the June 30 cutoff date. If the R1 stage has not been reached, XtendiMax can be applied up to June 30. With Tavium, application is allowed through V4, but not after June 30. There is no mention of growth stage with Engenia, he adds. This may enable Engenia to be applied later than Xtendimax in some cases, but not after June 30, he says.

"The cutoff date is easy to understand," says Zenteno. "It's very clear when that application window ends."

The date cutoff does prevent dicamba from being applied into July, when the bulk of off-target complaints surfaced in Minnesota in 2017.
"The data was clear in 2017 that (off-target) incidents increase after June 20 and especially in July," said Jeff Gunsolus, who served as University of Minnesota Extension weeds specialist that year before retiring in 2019.

A downside, though, is that weeds like waterhemp can still poke through after June 30 and threaten yield potential.

"I think everyone has to understand is that the cutoff date isn't as much about the (dicamba-tolerant) beans that are in the field, as much as it is about the neighboring crops and the sensitivity of adjacent fields," says Jamie Leifker, WinField United vice president of agronomy and product development. Thus, farmers will have to form management plans taking this into account, he adds.

*** Mandated use of a pH buffering agent to be mixed prior to all dicamba products being applied.** Adjuvants like these reduce acid content of tank mixes by pushing pH above 5 (acid content increases as a solution moves downward on the 0 to 14 pH scale). The higher the acid content, the more prone a herbicide is to volatize and move off target.
Bayer's product is VaporGrip Xtra Agent.

BASF's plans to launch its Sentris buffering technology for the 2021 growing season. It's a
liquid buffering agent that when added to a dicamba spray solution will increase and stabilize the solution pH and reduce the potential for volatility, say BASF officials.

"This will become part of the system, and farmers will have to factor it in as part of the cost and operational structure," says Leifker.
Volatility is only part of the reason that dicamba can go off-target, though. Physical drift also accounts for off-target dicamba, says Leifker.

"If you're not using the proper additives, nozzles and spraying in the right conditions—which can change at the snap of a finger—while making an application, drift can occur," says Leifker. He says that using proper technologies and spraying under recommended conditions may not be able to reduce drift 100%, but WinField United strategies have reduced driftable fines by over 60% lower than EPA recommendation, he says.

One drift reducing adjuvant WinField United sells to prevent off-target movement is InterLock. "It's one of the most dependable drift reducing agents on the market," Leifker says.

*** Increased the required downwind buffer from 110 feet to 240 feet, with an increased buffer of 310 feet in counties where endangered species exist.**
"Growers will continue to have to manage the buffer distances, just like they did in the past," says Zenteno."It now is an increased distance."

In the case of XtendiMax, the re-registration process also will feature an easier-to-follow label, says Zenteno. "We've added an application checklist overview in the beginning of the label that clearly outlines the summary of the key requirements," she says.

General Restrictions
These general restrictions for dicamba used in dicamba-tolerant soybeans still apply, says Hartzler.
*** Apply only one hour after sunrise through two hours before sunset;**
*** Apply when wind speed at boom height is between 3 and 10 miles per hour**
*** Do not apply during temperature inversions;**
*** Do not apply product if sensitive crops or certain plants are in an adjacent downwind field;**
*** Do not apply if rain is expected in next 48 hours that may result in runoff;**
*** Maximum boom height of 24 inches maximum ground speed of 15 mph**
*** Dicamba specific training still required;**
*** 57 ft omni-directional buffer required in counties with endangered species** (In Iowa, Hardin County and several counties in Northeastern Iowa are affected by this).

State Restrictions
* States were able to enact restrictions on the federal label with previous registrations. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) adopted two 24(c) restrictions to the federal label starting in 2018:
*** No dicamba applications in dicamba-tolerant soybeans after June 20.**
*** No dicamba applications in dicamba-tolerant soybeans if the daily high temperature is forecast to be over 85°F.**

Under FIFRA (Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, there is a specific process under its Section 24 (a) for states that wish to restrict the federal label, says Alex Dunn, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. Conversely, FIFRA's Section 24 (c) provides a specific process for states to expand the federal label .

However, states wishing to enact more restrictions on the federal label may have to go a different route than Section 24 (a) this time, says Zenteno.

"EPA has made some public statements about not allowing that," she says. "There are other measures that the states could use as far as trying to make the label (more) restrictive. I think for now, we just need to give states the time to review the new label." Ultimately, she adds it will fall on EPA to give guidance after states have reviewed the label, she adds.

That's something the MDA say it will do, according to a statement from Joshua Stamper, director of MDA's pesticide and fertilizer management division.

"Over the next several days the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) will be evaluating EPA's decision to reregister these products with additional restrictions. The MDA intends to make an announcement by the end of the year regarding use of these products in Minnesota so farmers have time to work with their agronomists and seed dealers and make a plan for the 2021 growing season."

Application Timing

Some University weed scientists, such as Hartzler, have recommended dicamba be used only as on a preemergence basis. This would reduce the risk of off-target dicamba hitting neighboring non-dicamba tolerant soybeans in later growth stages, he says.

Overall, though, XtendiMax has worked well as an over-the-top herbicide, says Zenteno.

"Even though there's been some challenges, I think overall when growers use the product in the way that we've set up the label, they've been incredibly happy and satisfied with the results they've gotten related to weed control."

She says many farmers apply XtendiMax in early soybean growth stages—such as early postemergence—when weeds are easiest to control at a 4-inch or below height.

"Growers who are more comfortable with that early application timing still see great benefits," she says. "It's just going to depend on each grower and what makes them feel comfortable and ultimately how they want to use the product. The added measures that are on this label should allow for the continued success."

Syngenta's Tavium follows the lead for early application. It's a premix of what Syngenta says is a low-volatility dicamba formulation and S-metolachlor (Dual Magnum, Group 15) herbicides. Tavium can be applied though the V4 growth stage of soybeans.

Resistance management via teaming a preemergence product like S-metolachlor with dicamba was the driving factor in developing Tavium, says Vern Hawkins, president of Syngenta Crop Protection.

"Certainly, taking us out of the over-the-top area did reduce the (off-target) risk but we wouldn't have applied the product that late in any case."

Still, there was a corollary benefit of reduced off-target exposure, he says.

BASF is also shifting focus to earlier applications with an anticipated launch of Engenia Prime (Engenia and Zidua, Group 15), pending regulatory approval.

"This new product will emphasize the importance of early timing, when weeds are only 2 or 3 or 4 inches tall," says Scott Kay, BASF vice president of U.S. crop protection.

Legal Challenges

Legal challenges remain. "Rather than evaluating the significant costs of dicamba drift as the 9th Circuit told them the law required, EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage," said George Kimbrell, legal director at Center for Food Safety, in a news release. "We will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals."

The Center for Food Safety was one of the four groups that filed a lawsuit that led to the June 3 Court decision that vacated the EPA's 2018 conditional registration of XtendiMax, Engenia, and FeXapan.

The coming presidential election may also influence matters. If former vice president Joe Biden wins, his EPA and Department of Justice may not defend the 2020 registration if it once again goes before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, says Benbrook. If that happens, it will be up to manufacturers to defend the registration, he adds.

If the Court rules against the re-registration, it may trigger a repeat of this year in 2021, when farmers have already ordered and are applying the chemical, Benbrook says. Benbrook doesn't see the Court suspending use for 2021. However, it may warn companies this is the last time it will allow this to happen. In 2022, this may leave farmers without the dicamba formulations to apply to their dicamba-tolerant crops, he says.

Bayer's Zenteno, though, says that EPA has made some strong statements in the registration that addressed concerns raised by the Court earlier this year.

"The EPA has spent a tremendous amount of effort to do a science-based review, and has based the new registration on additional data," she says.

EPA APPROVES DICAMBA ON GE COTTON AND SOYBEANS THROUGH 2025

Chuck Abbott, Successful Farming

https://www.agriculture.com/news/crops/epa-approves-dicamba-on-ge-cotton-and-soybeans-through-2025

The Trump administration approved the use of the weedkiller dicamba on genetically engineered cotton and soybeans for the next five years, saying new safeguards would tame a notoriously volatile herbicide blamed for damaging crops on millions of acres of neighboring lands. Farm groups cheered the continued access to a "critically important weed control tool" and the Center for Food Safety, a skeptic of industrial agriculture, said it "will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals."

EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler announced the approval, officially called a registration, on Tuesday, a week before the presidential election, in Georgia, a battleground state, with farm leaders on hand. "It goes into effect with the growing season next year," said Wheeler.

Farmers rapidly embraced dicamba, using it on tens of millions of acres, after it was introduced in 2017 as a potent new tool against invasive weeds that are resistant to glyphosate and other weedkillers. Just as quickly, complaints arose that dicamba evaporated too easily from where it was sprayed and wafted onto nearby crops, trees, and plants. In February, a federal jury awarded $265 million to a Missouri peach grower for damage to his 1,000-acre orchard. And in June, a federal appeals court vacated dicamba's registration; the EPA already was considering a new version.

To keep dicamba under control, the EPA will require a 240-foot buffer zone downwind of applications, previously 110 feet, and require the addition of a pH buffering agent. A senior EPA official said many pH agents are on the market and that mixing one into dicamba "makes the product dramatically less volatile." Nationwide cutoff dates were set as June 30 for soybeans and July 30 for cotton. A 310-foot buffer would be required around areas with endangered species.

"We believe the decision today will be protective of other farmers' crops," said Wheeler during a teleconference. He said hooded sprayers were an option to reduce the size of the buffer zone.
Groups representing soybean and cotton growers applauded the EPA decision. "The economic damage that would result from not being able to use dicamba herbicides would be tremendous," said Georgia farmer Kent Fountain, chairman of the National Cotton Council.

"EPA rushed reapproval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farms and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage," said legal director George Kimbrell of the Center for Food Safety in a statement. "Center for Food Safety will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals."

The National Wildlife Federation said the EPA registration, "despite evidence it causes off-target injury to crops and native plants, is wildly irresponsible."

Three dicamba formulations were approved, one each from Bayer, BASF, and Syngenta, said the senior EPA official. Dicamba was used on 46.5 million acres of soybeans and cotton in 2018, according to EPA estimates.

Although Kimbrell disagreed, Wheeler said EPA's review of new scientific material and consideration of comments by interested groups satisfied the June decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to vacate registrations. The court said the agency underestimated or ignored the risks associated with dicamba.

The EPA allowed farmers and pesticide applicators to use dicamba through July 31, effectively the application season for the herbicide, although it canceled the registration, as required. It defended the so-called existing stocks order as a routine practice to use up materials already purchased.

The fast-growing weed Palmer amaranth already is showing resistance to dicamba in at least five counties in western Tennessee, said weed specialist Larry Steckel of the University of Tennessee in late July. "So, is it time to panic? No," wrote Steckel in a university blog. "However, it is time to reassess weed management. Herbicide stewardship is now more important than ever."

The EPA final registration on dicamba is available here.

GCC Pleased with EPA Decision

Clint Thompson, Southeast Ag Net

https://southeastagnet.com/2020/10/29/georgia-cotton-commission-epa-dicamba/

Count the Georgia Cotton Commission (GCC) as one of the many agricultural organizations encouraged by and pleased with the Environmental Protection Agency's decision regarding the future use of three dicamba products.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency press release, the EPA approved new registrations for two "over-the-top" (OTT) dicamba products—XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology and Engenia Herbicide—and extended the registration for an additional OTT dicamba product, Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology. These registrations are only for use on dicamba-tolerant (DT) cotton and soybeans and will expire in 2025.

Clarity for Georgia Cotton Growers

This provides clarity for Georgia cotton growers for the upcoming growing season and beyond. Georgia Cotton Commission Executive Director Taylor Sills applauds the decision.

"Access to Dicamba is a huge issue for our growers, not just in Georgia, but growers across the cotton belt. The industry itself has made significant investments in these technologies and continued access to them is a critical tool as we go around proving our sustainability. Tools such as dicamba are very important to proving that for us," said Sills.

The EPA, led by Administrator Andrew Wheeler, made the announcement on Tuesday at the Cromley Farm in Brooklet, Georgia. All three registrations include new control measures to ensure these products can be used effectively while protecting the environment.

"It was very special to have Administrator Wheeler in Georgia for this announcement. It just goes to prove that the cotton growers of Georgia have been excellent stewards of this technology. Frankly, our growers are the gold standard. What Georgia has done as it relates to dicamba should be an example for the rest of the nation," Sills said.

Georgia Cotton Commission Welcomes Dicamba Announcement

Southeast Ag Net

https://southeastagnet.com/2020/10/28/georgia-cotton-commission-welcomes-dicamba-announcement/

(GCC) — On October 27th, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew R. Wheeler met with farmers and industry stakeholders at Cromley Farms, a sixth-generation family farm in Brooklet, to announce new five-year registrations for two dicamba products and an extended registration for an additional dicamba product. The Georgia Cotton Commission (GCC) is pleased with this announcement. The GCC would especially like to thank Administrator Wheeler and the EPA for the timeliness of the announcement, as growers will soon make purchasing decisions for the 2021 growing season.

GCC Chairman Bart Davis, a cotton farmer from Colquitt County, noted, "This announcement is a victory for cotton farmers in Georgia and across the cotton belt. Dicamba is a major tool for farmers to address our most problematic pests. The continued availability of dicamba is also essential in our continued efforts to prove the sustainability of our industry."

The event was hosted by Cromley Farms, the family farm of brothers Lee, a GCC Director, and Charley Cromley. "We were proud to host Administrator Wheeler and his team here on our farm. This announcement being made in Georgia shows that Georgia's farmers have been fantastic stewards of this technology," said Lee Cromley when asked about Administrator Wheeler coming to Bulloch County.

During the event, Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture Gary Black and EPA Region IV Administrator Mary Walker signed a Memorandum of Understanding that establishes collaborative efforts and foster relationships between the two agencies. Both announcements were applauded by the crowd, which included Georgia Congressmen Austin Scott, Doug Collins, Rick Allen, and Buddy Carter. American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall, a farmer from Greensboro and National Cotton Council of America Chairman Kent Fountain, a cotton ginner and grower from Surrency.

More information about the dicamba announcement can be found at the following link, https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-announces-2020-dicamba-registration-decision.

The Georgia Cotton Commission is a producer-funded organization located in Perry, Georgia. The Commission began in 1965. Georgia cotton producers pay an assessment enabling the Commission to invest in programs of research, promotion, and education on behalf of all cotton producers of Georgia. For more information about this and other topics please call 478-988-4235 or visit us on the web at www.georgiacottoncommission.org.

EPA updates five-year dicamba labels

Kokomo Perspective

http://kokomoperspective.com/news/agriculture/epa-updates-five-year-dicamba-labels/article_4277410f-0d33-5b58-a571-835b49d29785.html

The Environmental Protection Agency approved two new five-year registrations on dicamba products and extended the registration of another Oct. 27.

The decision comes after two of the three dicamba registrations were revoked this past summer by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit based on concerns the labels didn't go far enough to account for potential risks. After that decision, there was uncertainty if the herbicide would be allowed for the 2021 growing season.

"After reviewing substantial amounts of new information, conducting scientific assessments based on the best available science, and carefully considering input from stakeholders we have reached a resolution that is good for our farmers and our environment," EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler said.

The new registrations are for XtendiMax with VaporGrip Technology and Engenia Herbicide, with Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology receiving an extension. All are scheduled to expire in 2025.

The new labels feature updated restrictions on dicamba forcing applications to be complete before June 30 or R1 stage, and maintaining a 240-foot buffer between the last treated row and downwind field edges. The buffer is an increase from the previous label, which only called for a 110-foot buffer at 22 ounces and a 220-foot buffer at 44 ounces.

Other restrictions on the label are:

- Apply only one hour after sunrise through two hours before sunset;
- Apply when wind speed at boom height is between 3 and 10 mph;
- Do not apply during temperature inversions;
- Do not apply product if sensitive crops or certain plants are in an adjacent downwind field;
- Do not apply if rain is expected in next 48 hours that may result in runoff;
- Maximum boom height of 24 inches, maximum ground speed of 15 mph;

This decision is viewed as a victory for BASF and Bayer, which utilize dicamba products in their seed lines. They said it is important to keep every tool available to producers who are looking to maximize yields.

"Controlling resistant weeds is not only a physical challenge for farmers, it also can have a significant financial impact," Scott Kay, BASF's Vice President of U.S. Crops, said in a statement. "Farmers planting dicamba-tolerant cotton and soybeans could potentially stand to lose more than $10 billion if they lost access to dicamba-based herbicides."

However, the decision isn't without controversy.

Dicamba drift has been an issue in fields across the Midwest, as non-tolerant crops have been damaged by the use of the herbicide due to wind drift. Some environmental groups plan to challenge the decision.

"Rather than evaluating the significant costs of dicamba drift as the 9th Circuit told them the law required, EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage," said George Kimbrell, legal director at Center for Food Safety. "We will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals."

Dicamba good news for soybean growers, bad for waterhemp

Jerry Groskreutz, KDHL Radio

https://kdhlradio.com/dicamba-good-news-for-soybean-growers-bad-for-waterhemp/

On Tuesday EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler announced a five year registration or label for dicamba over the top use on soybeans. That is good news for soybean growers and bad news for waterhemp and giant ragweed! "This decision includes a five year registration providing certainty to growers as they make future purchasing decisions" said Wheeler.

The EPA Federal Label has an application cutoff date of June 30th for soybeans and July 30th for cotton. Getting a Federal Label is the first step for applying dicamba over the top on soybeans. The next step is the Minnesota Department of Agriculture must also approve of dicamba over the top on soybeans. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture Label can be more restrictive than the Federal Label but not less.

If the Minnesota Department of Agriculture approves dicamba and I think they will, I am pretty sure we will still have the June 20 cutoff date or maybe sooner. I suspect the Minnesota Department of Agriculture already had decided if they would approve dicamba in Minnesota if a Federal Label was issued. In addition they probably have already decided how restrictive the label would be for use in Minnesota. We should know soon!

EPA Extends Registration of Syngenta's Tavium Plus VaporGrip

No-Till Farmer

https://www.no-tillfarmer.com/articles/10107-epa-extends-registration-of-syngentas-tavium-plus-vaporgrip

GREENSBORO, N.C. – Syngenta announced that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has extended the registration for Tavium Plus VaporGrip Technology herbicide in dicamba-tolerant soybeans and cotton. As the market's first dicamba herbicide premix, Tavium contains built-in residual control to manage resistant weeds and maintain clean fields throughout the season. Tavium, a proprietary Syngenta premix, will be available for the 2021 growing season, subject to state approvals.

Tavium can be used preplant, at planting and early post-emergence on dicamba-tolerant soybeans and cotton. A combination of the contact control of dicamba and the residual control of *S*-metolachlor, Tavium offers growers a convenient premix to manage key ALS-, PPO- and glyphosate-resistant broadleaf and grass weeds.

"Following the unpredictable circumstances this year, growers will be closely looking at their dicamba herbicide options for 2021," said Pete Eure, herbicide technical lead at Syngenta. "In its first full season in the field, Tavium delivered consistent weed control, crop safety and three weeks longer residual than dicamba alone across geographies in soybeans and cotton. It is the market's first dicamba herbicide premix, and it remains a powerful and convenient choice for growers next year."

Syngenta developed the Tavium formulation to target the toughest weeds growers face, including waterhemp, Palmer amaranth, horseweed (marestail), common and giant ragweed, kochia, morningglory, barnyardgrass, and foxtail. Through the combination of dicamba and *S*-metolachlor, Tavium manages more than 70 notorious grass and broadleaf weed species.

Tavium is a valuable tool for growers in the fight against resistant weeds, delivering exceptional performance by:

- Controlling weeds with residual activity, providing three weeks longer residual control than dicamba alone
- Combining the contact control of dicamba and the residual control of *S*-metolachlor in one convenient product, saving growers time and providing a positive ROI
- Acting in all tillage systems as a burndown, preemergence and early post-emergence herbicide across geographies
- Working with numerous approved tank-mix partners that can help extend the control growers achieve
- Delivering two effective sites of action to help delay the onset of herbicide resistance

- Providing the best chance of a one-pass post-emergence application in soybeans when used in an effective two-pass system, keeping rows clean until crop canopy

Tavium should be used as part of a two-pass program to preserve the efficacy of auxin technologies like dicamba. Syngenta recommends applying Tavium following a preemergence application of Boundary 6.5 EC, BroadAxe XC or Prefix herbicides in soybeans, or after Caparol 4L herbicide in cotton. When used in a preemergence application, Tavium can be followed by Sequence, Flexstar GT 3.5 or Prefix herbicides in soybeans.

"When combined with diversified management and agronomic practices — such as starting clean and applying effective two-pass herbicide applications — this formulation can help reduce selection pressure on dicamba," said Eure. "Tavium showed proven performance in the field this year, and both its application flexibility and convenience as a premix will make it a popular choice for growers in 2021."

With the additional residual control and second layer of effectiveness against weeds, Tavium is another example of how Syngenta is accelerating innovation to address the increasing challenges for farmers and the environment, as well as the changing views of society. The company continues to invest in technologies that matter to bring about positive, lasting change for more sustainable agriculture.

To learn more about Tavium, visit SyngentaUS.com/Tavium.

Gov. Ricketts, Agriculture Director comment on EPA's re-registration of Dicamba products

KTIC Radio

https://kticradio.com/agricultural/gov-ricketts-agriculture-director-comment-on-epas-re-registration-of-dicamba-products/

LINCOLN – Governor Pete Ricketts and Nebraska Department of Agriculture Director (NDA) Steve Wellman issued statements following a decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to re-register dicamba products.

"I welcome the recent decision by the EPA to approve registration for the 'over-the-top' dicamba products," said Gov. Ricketts. "The agency's transparent process provides certainty to Nebraska farmers and ranchers in a year where things have been anything but normal. Our producers now have the necessary information to make confident decisions when it comes to spring planting in 2021 and for the next few years to come."

"The EPA's recent dicamba decision is welcome news for Nebraska farmers and ranchers and the state of Nebraska – providing certainty for the industry when it's needed most," said Director Wellman. "This outcome, based on science and stakeholder input, will allow Nebraskans the appropriate time needed to make informed decisions prior to the 2021 planting season. The Nebraska Department of Agriculture will continue to work in partnership with the EPA to properly enforce this decision and respond to requests to adopt the new label and register products in Nebraska."

EPA announces 5-year dicamba extension

Ravalli Republic

https://ravallirepublic.com/agriculture/article_2900d944-2431-528d-b458-6ddab8646653.html

ROOKLET, Ga. — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced Oct. 27 that EPA is approving new five-year registrations for two dicamba products and extending the registration of an additional dicamba product.

BASF Preps for New Dicamba Label With New Products, Training

Cotton Grower

https://www.cottongrower.com/crop-inputs/weed-management/basf-preps-for-new-dicamba-label-with-new-products-training/

Following EPA's five-year registration of new dicamba products – including Engenia herbicide – for over-the-top use on dicamba-tolerant cotton and soybeans, BASF is launching two new products to help meet the specifications of the new federal label.

Continuing its long-term commitment to dicamba technology and providing farmers with solutions for controlling resistant weeds and producing on-target applications, BASF is adding Sentris buffering technology and Engenia Prime herbicide to the company's product lineup.

Sentris, which will launch in time for use in the 2021 growing season, is a liquid buffering agent that, when added to a dicamba spray solution, will increase and stabilize the solution pH and reduce the potential for volatility. It will help growers minimize the potential for off-target applications of their Engenia application mixes and has also been proven to reduce the potential for tank contamination by helping with spray system clean-out and hygiene.

Engenia Prime will offer multiple sites of action and is most effective pre-emergent, to help farmers manage weed challenges while providing application timing flexibility. Engenia Prime is not yet registered for purchase or use and is awaiting EPA approval.

"When the weeds win, farmers see the impact to their livelihoods, harvests and yields," said Scott Kay, Vice President of U.S. Crop, BASF Agricultural Solutions. "Controlling resistant weeds is not only a physical challenge for farmers, it also can have a significant financial impact. It is estimated that certain resistant weed populations can reduce yields by 50% or more. This means that farmers planting dicamba-tolerant cotton and soybeans could potentially stand to lose more than $10 billion if they lost access to dicamba-based herbicides."

Training Programs to Continue

BASF continues to work with the EPA and state agencies to create state-specific training materials. The company will offer a robust training initiative for the 2021 season to ensure farmers and applicators are trained on the new Engenia herbicide label requirements.

"Knowing the proper application techniques and understanding the product label requirements is critical to maximizing Engenia herbicide on-target applications," said Rick Chamblee, Director, Technical Service, U.S. Crop, BASF Agricultural Solutions. "We have trained more than 68,000 applicators since 2018 and will continue to invest in stewardship training to ensure farmers and applicators are prepared to make proper applications during the next growing season."

To learn more about Engenia herbicide, the new label and stewardship practices, visit Engenia-Updates.com.

Based on information provided by BASF

What the New Dicamba Label Looks Like in the Real World

Sonja Begemann

https://www.agweb.com/article/what-new-dicamba-label-looks-real-world

Late Tuesday afternoon, EPA announced it approved three dicamba formulations for over-the-top use for five years, 2021 through 2025. The formulations included are BASF's Engenia, Syngenta's Tavium and Bayer's XtendiMax.

"The five-year component is huge because it gets rid of uncertainty," says Jim Hedges, vice president of seed for Winfield United. "You know [2020] caused a lot of anxiety amongst growers and our owners, ag retailers. So, having this stability within the trait platform, as we start to transition from Xtend to XtendFlex is great."

This five-year unconditional registration varies from previous approvals in length and conditions. It did, however, list changes to the label that must be followed by applicators. As a reminder, these changes include:

- Downwind buffer of 240' is required and a buffer of 310' required where listed species are located. The previous label buffer was 110' for downwind.
- Over-the-top application of dicamba of soybeans prohibited nationwide after June 30, and after July 30 in cotton.

- An approved pH buffering agent will be required to be mixed for application to lower volatility. Buffering agents are registered with the EPA and must be documented each use.
- Opportunities for growers to use hooded sprayers to reduce buffers.
- No more 44 oz. rate option.

"All of these efforts will help ensure there are not negative impacts on other farmers' lands," says Andrew Wheeler, EPA administrator. "States can further restrict, but they have to work with us and file the appropriate requests with EPA. We're trying to have a national program here, we're responding to the court's concerns with a national cutoff."

Implications for applications.

Bayer and BASF have each created their own buffering agent to help reduce volatility. They're required tank-mix additives.

"VaporGrip Xtra [Bayer's buffering agent] works in two ways, the first is to control that pH solution," says Alex Zenteno, Bayer dicamba product manager. "The other is the VaporGrip technology attaches itself to available protons in a solution to prevent the formation of the dicamba acid."

So far, each product has been tested on a smaller scale, which leaves some to wonder how effective they'll be in real-world conditions.

"We'll have to wait and see how effective volatility reducing agents are," says Bob Hartzler, Iowa State University Extension weed scientist. "I'm aware of their tests on relative small-scale studies and I think it's hard to ramp up when you start spraying large acreages."

In addition, the label now has a national spray cutoff—June 30 for soybeans and July 30 for cotton. EPA officials said they believe this move addresses some concerns outlined by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

"I don't think universal dates work," Hartzler continues. "I don't see how the date that works for Iowa would be appropriate for Arkansas. June 30 is probably about as good as you could hope for in Iowa."

There might be opportunities for states to create local changes to the label, including cut off dates. In the past states have added further restrictions and this coming year could see more of the same, or the potential for request for a broader application window. States have to work with EPA to enact any changes.

The last big change is to downwind buffer requirements. Previously, EPA required a 110' bugger for 22 oz rates and a 220' buffer for 44 oz. rates. There will be no more 44 oz. option and the downwind buffer more than doubled to 240' with this new label.

Like with previous labels, if a sensitive crop, including non-Xtend soybeans or cotton, is downwind, farmers and applicators should not spray dicamba. In areas with endangered species a 310' downwind buffer and 57' border buffer is required.

"Let's give these changes a year or two and see if they've minimized problems we saw in the first four years," Hartzler says. "If they dramatically reduce them, I say let's keep going. But if we see similar problems we saw through 2020 I think [over-the-top dicamba] needs to be reevaluated. How much can you tweak the label?"

Keep tools in the toolbox.

Industry and some farmers have praised EPA for this decision as it keeps yet another tool in their toolbox in the fight against resistant weeds.

"We need that mode of action out there," says Nick Ehlers, farmer from eastern Iowa. "Let's see guys do a wonderful job of spraying it. We need a mode of action with residual that waterhemp and pigweeds can't break through."

Ehlers notes that some farmers in his area don't always follow label directions exactly—a practice he implores them to stop. With new label changes, and 'simpler' terms added to new new label that is half the size of the 2018 label, he hopes they will.

"The need for Engenia herbicide is greater than ever before due to increased weed resistance," Scott Kay, Vice President of U.S. Crop, BASF Agricultural Solutions said in a news release. "Controlling resistant weeds is not only a physical challenge for farmers, it also can have a significant financial impact. Farmers planting dicamba-tolerant cotton and soybeans could potentially stand to lose more than $10 billion if they lost access to dicamba-based herbicides, like Engenia herbicide."

After a brief ban, E.P.A. decides to allow controversial weed killer dicamba

H. Claire Brown, The Counter

https://thecounter.org/epa-allows-dicamba-herbicide-bayer-monsanto/

The herbicide can be sprayed with added restrictions for another five years.

Earlier this summer, a court ruling and subsequent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) order threatened to throw farmers for a loop: The government was banning dicamba, a controversial herbicide that drifted from farm to farm, damaging neighbors' crops and local flora.

Trouble was, the decision came *after* many growers had already planted seeds that were genetically modified to tolerate being sprayed by dicamba. Without it, they worried their soy and cotton fields would be overrun with weeds. The agency ultimately relented, allowing farmers to spray the banned weed killer through much of the summer.

This week, the EPA reversed course again: It announced it will allow chemical companies to re-register dicamba, meaning farmers can spray it on their crops for the next five years, albeit with a few more restrictions. It will also require farmers to mix herbicides containing dicamba with a compound meant to reduce volatility.

The news was greeted with relief by farm groups and chemical companies. "Growers have been clear how vitally important this tool is for their weed-management programs," said Bayer's dicamba manager Alex Zenteno in a press release. In 2018 Bayer acquired Monsanto, which had invested huge amounts of money in developing dicamba-tolerant seeds, despite warnings from scientists that the herbicide could cause drift problems. The American Soybean Association released a press release thanking the EPA for supporting "the continued success of our industry."

"EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage."

Environmental groups were, predictably, less pleased. ""Rather than evaluating the significant costs of dicamba drift as the 9th Circuit told them the law required, EPA rushed re-approval as a political prop just before the election, sentencing farmers and the environment to another five years of unacceptable damage. We will most certainly challenge these unlawful approvals," said George Kimbrell, legal director for the Center for Food Safety, in a press release.

Dicamba has caused drift problems for several years now, despite efforts by federal and state regulators to minimize its volatility. A peach farmer in Missouri won a $265 million judgment against chemical companies over drift complaints earlier this year; the herbicide has been blamed for killing tens of millions of trees across the Midwest. Scientists are also examining potential correlation between dicamba use and liver and bile duct cancer among farmers who use it over a long period of time.

The EPA was initially forced to vacate the dicamba registration as part of a ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled in June that the agency violated a law that regulates pesticides when it initially approved the weed killer. The lawsuit—which was brought by family farm groups and environmental advocates—alleged that the EPA didn't review enough evidence when it approved the product. Particularly telling: It did not evaluate a single study that examined the impact of off-target dicamba drift on soybean yield.

It remains to be seen whether the new restrictions on dicamba application—namely, shorter spraying windows, larger buffer zones, and mandatory addition of compounds to balance the weed killer's pH—will prevent the herbicide from damaging crops. Farmers and advocates have complained that past restrictions are impossible to follow; some argue that the rules on the label function more as legal cover for chemical companies to blame farmers for drifting pesticides than real preventative measures. "Given EPA-approved versions of dicamba have already damaged millions of U.S. acres

of crops and natural areas there's no reason to trust that the agency got it right this time," said Nathan Donley, senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity, in a press release.

New Dicamba Labels

Emily Unglesbee, DTN Progressive Farmer

https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/crops/article/2020/10/28/breakdown-changes-2020-dicamba

ROCKVILLE, Md. (DTN) -- EPA released three new dicamba over-the-top herbicide labels on Tuesday: XtendiMax (Bayer), Engenia (BASF) and Tavium (Syngenta).

(FeXapan -- Corteva Agriscience's marketed version of XtendiMax -- is not yet registered for use, but Corteva confirmed to DTN that the company will be seeking a federal registration of the product now that XtendiMax is registered).

The three new labels come with many pages of details and use restrictions, some old, some new. DTN analyzed each one to see what changes were made from the 2018 registration, as well as what might look familiar to applicators. Here's the breakdown.

WHAT DID CHANGE

Here is a chart detailing how the new dicamba labels differ from the 2018 labels:

LABEL SECTION	OLD 2018 LABELS	NEW 2020 LABELS
Size of Label	40 pages (XtendiMax); 27 pages (Engenia); 30 pages (Tavium)	17 pages (XtendiMax); 21 pages (Engenia); 34 pages (Tavium)
Length of Registration	2-year registration	5-year registration (ends 2025)
Labeled Crops	Engenia and XtendiMax: Xtend (dicamba-tolerant) crops listed alongside a large group of non-dicamba-tolerant crops Tavium: dicamba-tolerant (Xtend) crops and non-dicamba-tolerant soybeans listed.	All three: Only labeled for use with two dicamba-tolerant crops (Xtend RR2/XtendFlex soybeans and XtendFlex cotton) for all three herbicides.
Max Rate Permitted	XtendiMax: 44 oz/acre (1 lb. dicamba ae/acre) -- preemerge only; Engenia: 25.6 oz/acre (1 lb. dicamba ae/acre) -- preemerge only; Tavium: 3.53 pint/acre (0.5 lb. dicamba ae/acre and 1 lb. s-metolachlor/acre)	XtendiMax: 22 oz/acre (0.5 lb. dicamba ae/acre); Engenia: 12.8 oz/acre (0.5 lb. dicamba ae/acre); Tavium: 3.53 pint/acre (0.5 lb. dicamba ae/acre and 1 lb. metolachlor/acre)
Spray Timing Restriction	XtendiMax and Engenia: No applications after R1 or 45 days post-soybean planting; no spraying after mid-bloom or 60 days post-cotton planting; Tavium: No spraying after V4 or 45 days post-soybean planting; no applications after 6-leaf cotton or 60 days post-cotton planting.	All three: No spraying after June 30 in soybeans and after July 30 in cotton, plus: XtendiMax: No applications after R1 in soybeans; Engenia: No mention of growth stages; Tavium: No application after V4 in soybeans or after 6-leaf cotton.
Buffer for non-sensitive areas	110-foot downwind buffer	240-foot downwind buffer

Buffer for endangered species	110-foot downwind buffer to limit spray drift + 57-foot omnidirectional buffer.	310-foot downwind buffer to limit spray drift + 57-foot omnidirectional buffer.
Buffer Reduction Option	Did not exist.	Buffers for non-sensitive areas may be reduced to 110 feet, and buffers for endangered species may be reduced to 240 feet when using a qualified hooded sprayer in soybeans only.
Volatility Avoidance	Language suggesting applicators try to keep the pH of their tank mix above 5 to minimize volatility risks.	XtendiMax and Tavium require use of a qualified pH buffering adjuvant or VRA (volatility-reducing agent) AND a drift-reduction agent (DRA) in every application, to be listed on registrant websites. Engenia only requires the use of a pH buffering adjuvant.
Training Requirements	Dicamba or auxin-specific training required for all applicators by either the state or the registrants.	Dicamba or auxin-specific training required for all applicators by either the state or registrants, with the addition of some new required education on 2020 changes such as use of hooded sprayers and pH buffering adjuvants or VRAs.
Recordkeeping requirements	Applicators must document a list of 14 to 20 required items (variation due to different item breakdowns between products) within 72 hours of application and keep records for two years.	Applicators must document all the same items within the same time period for two years, with the addition of the new 2020 requirements such as use of a buffering pH agent/VRA and hooded sprayer use.

EPA also announced another change during its dicamba registration decision. The agency will no longer permit states to use Section 24(c) special local needs labels (SLNs) to add further restrictions to the federal dicamba labels, as many states have done in the past, mostly with temperature and cutoff dates.

From now on, the EPA will only allow states to create additional uses via 24(c) labels, per the language of the law. If states want to further restrict the federal label, they will have to use Section 24(a) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), which requires states go through their lawmaking or rule-making process.

Thank you.

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